GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5903
ANSWERED ON:17.05.2007
CIRCULATION OF OLD CYLINDERS
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Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of LPG cylinders of Indane` and other companies in circulation in the market in different parts of the country as on date ;

(b) the number of LPG cylinders which are still in circulation whereas their period of use is over, company-wise ;

(c) whether the Government has evolved or proposes to evolve any scheme to withdraw such cylinders from the market;

(d) if so, whether the Government has received requests from public representatives in this regard ;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the action taken by the Government in this regard ?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS (SHRIDINSHAPATEL)

(a): At present, 3 Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs), namely Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) have nearly 15.17 crore cylinders in circulation in the country.

(b): There is no fixed life for LPG cylinders. As per the Gas Cylinders Rules, the cylinders are periodically tested and on being found fit are taken back into circulation. New LPG cylinders are being inducted by OMCs regularly. On detection, sub-standard / spurious cylinders are confiscated and thereafter de-shaped / crushed to prevent their re-circulation.

(c)to(f): OMCs are procuring LPG cylinders from cylinder manufacturers who are approved by the Oil Industry Technical Committee (OITC) and have valid manufacturing licences from the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) and the Chief Controller of Explosives (CCOE). Strict control is exercised by BIS over the manufacturing process. LPG cylinders procured by OMCs meet the required quality standards.
LPG cylinders are manufactured under the close supervision of a third party inspection agency, viz. BIS, which enforces strict control over the manufacturing process. OITC also carries out surprise audit of cylinder manufacturing units to ascertain the quality standards of the cylinders. Cylinders received from distributors/transporters at the bottling plants are mandatorily checked for quality and genuineness to avoid the entry of fake and outdated cylinders in circulation.
As per the Gas Cylinders Rules, new cylinders are removed from circulation after regular intervals for extensive inspection and testing as per relevant IS codes. On detection, sub-standard / spurious cylinders are confiscated and thereafter de-shaped / crushed to prevent their re-circulation. In addition to this, during the course of its use, if any major defects or leaks are noticed, then those cylinders are removed for repair or scrapped. Utmost care is taken by the OMCs to ensure that only sound cylinders are despatched to the customers.
Apart from the legal action which could be taken against any supplier of spurious LPG equipment, in case any distributor is found in possession of spurious equipment or inducts such equipment in the distribution system, Marketing Discipline Guidelines provide, inter-alia, for confiscation of equipment, imposition of fine and recovery at penal rates for the first and second offences and termination of distributorship in the event of a third offence.